

REMARKS

The Applicant wishes to thank the Examiner for thoroughly reviewing and considering the pending application. The Official Action dated November 19, 2003 has been received and carefully reviewed. Claim 13 has been amended. Claims 1-22 are currently pending. In addition, the specification has been amended. No new matter has been added. Reexamination and reconsideration is respectfully requested.

The Official Action objected to the drawings for the reasons noted therein. The Applicants have amended the drawings as indicated in the attachment. The applicants submit that the drawing changes overcome the objection, and request withdrawal of same.

In addition, the Official Action rejected claims 10 and 22 under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph, as allegedly failing to comply with the enablement requirement. As noted above, the Applicants have amended the specification and submit that, as amended, the application overcomes the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph, and request withdrawal of same.

The Official Action also rejected claims 13-22 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as allegedly being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which the Applicants regard as the invention. The Applicants have amended claim 13 as noted above and respectfully submit that, as amended, claims 13-22 overcome the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, and request withdrawal of the same.

The Official Action also rejected claims 1, 3-8, 11-18, 20 and 21 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,033,293 (hereinafter “*Crevasse*”) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,398,905 (hereinafter “*Ward*”). The Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection of claims 1, 3-8, 11-18, 20 and 21 and request reconsideration.

As required in Chapter 2143.03 of the M.P.E.P., in order to “establish *prima facie* obviousness of the claimed invention, all the limitations must be taught or suggested by the prior

art.” The Applicants respectfully submit that neither *Crevasse* nor *Ward*, either singularly or in combination, disclose each and every element recited in each of claims 1, 3-8, 11-18, 20 and 21.

Independent claim 1, for example, defines a rigid plate assembly being receivable on a rotatable platen. The rigid plate assembly comprises, among other things, a rigid plate member and a polishing pad provided on the top surface of the rigid plate member, where the polishing pad is adhesively bonded to the rigid plate member, and where the rigid plate assembly is suctioned onto the top surface of a rotatable platen. However, neither *Crevasse* nor *Ward* teach or suggest a polishing pad adhesively bonded to a top surface of a rigid plate member. Nor does either teach or suggest a rigid plate assembly suctioned onto the top surface of a rotatable platen.

The Official Action correctly pointed out that *Crevasse* fails to show a polishing pad adhesively bonded to a rigid plate. Official Action at 4. However, the Official Action indicates that *Ward* “discloses the polishing pad (14) is adhesively bonded to the rigid plate (20).” See Official Action at pgs. 4 and 6. The Applicants respectfully disagree. Actually, *Ward* discloses that a “platen 20 has attached to its upper surface 12 a polishing pad 14 by a layer of adhesive 16.” See col. 3, lines 53-54 of *Ward*. *Ward* does not disclose a rigid plate (20) as the Examiner suggests. In addition, neither *Crevasse* nor *Ward*, either singularly or in combination, disclose or suggest a rigid plate assembly onto a top surface of a rotatable platen. For at least these reasons, independent claim 1 is patentable over *Crevasse* in view of *Ward*.

Independent claim 3 defines a CMP polishing unit comprising, among other things, a rigid plate member and a polishing pad on the top surface of the rigid plate member, where the polishing pad is adhesively bonded to the rigid plate member. The CMP polishing unit also comprises a rotatable platen that has a vacuum channel for asserting a vacuum on the rigid plate member. As stated above, neither *Crevasse* nor *Ward* teach or suggest a polishing pad adhesively bonded to rigid plate member. Nor does either teach or suggest a rotatable platen

having a vacuum channel for asserting a vacuum on a rigid plate member. Accordingly, claim 3, as well as claims 4-8, 11 and 12, which depend therefrom, are patentable over *Crevasse* in view of *Ward*.

Independent claim 13 defines a method of using a vacuum to hold a rigid plate assembly to a rotatable platen in a polishing apparatus which involves adhesively arranging a polishing pad on a top surface of a rigid plate member thereby forming a rigid plate assembly. The method also includes suctioning the rigid plate assembly onto a top surface of the rotatable platen.

For reasons similar to those set forth above in discussing claim 1, it is clear that *Crevasse* nor *Ward* describe a method that involves adhesively arranging a polishing pad on a top surface of a rigid plate assembly or suctioning a rigid plate assembly onto a top surface of a rotatable platen. As such, claim 13 and claims 14-18, 20 and 21 which depend therefrom, are patentable over *Crevasse* in view of *Ward*.

As claims 1, 3-8, 11-18, 20 and 21 are patentable over *Crevasse* and *Ward*, the Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the rejection of these claims under 35 U.S.C. §103(a).

In addition, the Official Action rejected claims 2, 9, 10, 19 and 22 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over *Crevasse* in view of *Ward* as applied to claims 1, 3 and 13 and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,629,876 to *Park et al.* (hereinafter "*Park*"). The rejection of claims 2, 9, 10, 19 and 22 is traversed and reconsideration is hereby requested.

As discussed above, both *Crevasse* and *Ward* fail to disclose each and every element of claims 1, 3 and 13, from which claims 2, 9, 10, 19 and 22 depend. Furthermore, *Park* fails to address the previously noted shortcomings discussed with reference to both *Crevasse* and *Ward*. The combined teachings of *Crevasse*, *Ward* and *Park*, fail to disclose each and every element

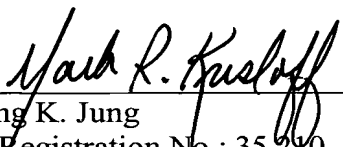
recited in claims 2, 9, 10, 19 and 22 as required under 35 U.S.C. §103(a). As such, the Applicants respectfully submit that claims 2, 9, 10, 19 and 22 are patentable over *Crevasse* in view of *Ward* as applied to claims 1, 3 and 13 and further in view of *Park* under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) and request that the rejection be withdrawn.

In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, notice of the same is earnestly solicited.

The Applicants hereby authorize the Commissioner of Patents to charge any fees necessary to complete this filing, including any fees required under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 for any necessary Extension of Time to make the filing of the attached documents timely, or credit any overpayment in fees, to Deposit Account No. 50-0911. Further, if these papers are not considered timely filed, then a petition is hereby made under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 for the necessary extension of time.

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Respectfully submitted,

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Attachments



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FIG. 5

